United Nations

Press Release

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F R I D A Y H I G H L I G H T S

- Security Council unanimously deplores recent deportation by Israel of four Palestinians from occupied territories and calls for safe and immediate return of all those deported.

- United Nations and Iraq reach agreement on modalities for operation of security guard contingent in northern Iraq.

- Secretary-General expresses deep concern about condition of political prisoners currently on hunger strike in South Africa.

- Next round of talks between Government of El Salvador and Frente Farabundo Marti para la Liberacion Nacional (FMLN) to begin in Venezuela this weekend.

- Secretary-General recommends that Security Council extend mandate of United Nations Disengagement Observer Force in Golan Heights for a further period of 6 months, until 30 November; calls situation in Middle East "potentially dangerous".

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Meeting at the request of its non-aligned members, the Security Council tonight unanimously adopted a resolution deeply deploring the recent deporation by Israel of four Palestinians from the occupied territories and calling for the safe and immediate return of all those deported.

The resolution declared the deportations to be in violation of the Geneva Convention on the protection of civilians in wartime which, it said, was applicable to all Palestinian territories occupied by Israel since 1967, including Jerusalem.

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For information media—not an official record

Agreement was reached today in Baghdad between the Secretary-General's Executive Delegate, Sadruddin Aga Khan, and the Iraqi authorities on the modalities for a 500-member United Nations security guard contingent in northern Iraq.

A United Nations official today told correspondents that 10 guards were already at their post in Dohuk; another 30 were to join them on Monday (27 May), and approximately 30 more would arrive in the area by the end of the week. All in all, some 460 guards were expected to be recruited from Geneva, Vienna and New York, possibly including some former staff members who would be re-hired.

Meanwhile, a United Nations press officer reporting from Geneva today quoted the Secretary-General Executive Delegate Sadruddin Aga Khan as saying that the guards would act as "moral witnesses" to help inspire confidence for refugees returning to the country.

Sadruddin Aga Khan told the press that the unprecedented operation would be financed by voluntary contributions and that he would be discussing the matter with humanitarian agencies in Geneva on Monday. He said he was optimistic about funding since the operation followed a request from the three western permanent members of the Security Council. The humanitarian operations involving United Nations security guards in Iraq were a "revolutionary challenge", he said.

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The Secretary-General said today, through his Spokesman, that he was deeply concerned at the condition of the political prisoners currently on hunger strike in South Africa. He called on the Government of South Africa to address urgently what he described as "this serious situation".

He said he hoped that the Government would ensure the prompt release of all political prisoners in accordance with the commitments it had undertaken and the expectations of the international community.

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A United Nations spokesman said today that the next round of talks between the Government of El Salvador and the Frente Farabundo Marti para la Liberacion Nacional (FMLN) would begin in Venezuela this weekend. He said the talks would concentrate as a matter of priority on a political agreement on the armed forces and the accords necessary for the cessation of the armed confrontation. Both the Secretary-General's Personal Representative, Alvaro de Soto, and Under-Secretary-General Marrack Goulding would be conducting the talks on cease-fire arrangements.

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